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ABSTRACT

During an interview (Playboy magazine, April, 1971), actor John Wayne expressed certain educational theories and attitudes concerning American minority groups. His outlook is an authentic summary of the intellectual convictions of the vast majority of white Americans today. This "psychology of whiteness" is the academic explanation for the concept of racism. Scholars have historically amassed data which supported the concept of racial inequality. The black community has developed a massive disenchantment with integration, and has begun to move toward the "politics of blackness," which is not racist but affirms the right to survive. The racist term "disadvantaged" should be replaced by the term "disequalized" which more accurately reflects the condition of oppressed minority groups. There are other educational and psychological concepts which are equally demeaning and inaccurate, including many concepts in intelligence testing. Educational accountability will help to change some of the present educational criteria. Psychological research must also be redirected for improved contributions to human progress. (Author/DM)

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# The Psychology of Whiteness vs. the Politics of Blackness:

## An Educational Power Struggle*

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The list of topics describing the various papers and research projects at this meeting are of such massive erudition that I hope this distinguished gathering of psychologists and educators will not be too deeply wounded in spirit if I choose to quote from the current edition of Playboy magazine to illustrate the topic of my talk.

This is by no way an endorsement of that audacious exponent of white womanhood and white supremacy. The only difference between the white racism of Playboy and National Geographic magazine is generational. Playboy is for "dirty young white men" who enjoy their nudity white and National Geographic is for the "dirty old white men" who enjoy their nudity brown or black. I guess the millennium of inter-ethnic harmony will arrive in America when the Playmates of the month are only brown or black and the only bared white breasts seen in National Geographic will be white women and not those of Indonesian, Tahitian or African women.

But this month's Playboy happens to contain an interview with one of the most stalwart defenders of the American colonialistic way of life which Playboy has enjoyed nuturing. The defender is none other than that Nordic philosopher-king cum actor, John Wayne. As educators,

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many of you should be interested in the educational theories on which Mr. Wayne pontificates in this remarkable dialogue.

Responding to a question concerning Blacks, Mr. Wayne replies: "I believe in white supremacy until the blacks are educated to the point of responsibility. I don't believe in giving authority and positions of leadership and judgement to irresponsible people."

Apparently appalled by this seductive honesty, the Playboy interviewer rejcins: "Are you equipped to judge which blacks are irresponsible and which of their leaders are inexperienced?"

Undaunted, Mr. Wayne allies himself with all of you sitting in this room to further buttress his argument. He replies: "It's not my judgement. The academic community has developed certain tests that determine whether the blacks are sufficiently equipped scholastically. But some blacks have tried to force the issue and enter college when they haven't passed the tests and don't have the requisite background."

The interviewer refuses to give up. He asks: "But isn't it true we're never likely to rectify the inequities in our educational system until some sort of remedial education is given to disadvantaged minority groups?"

The thespian turned academic authority responds: "What good would it do to register anybody in a class of higher algebra or calculus if they haven't learned to count? There has to be a standard."

The interview then shifts to another oppressed minority in this country which has been burdened with historical error by being falsely

labeled as "Indians." For those of you who were raised in the educational tradition of the movie house, it is a fair statement to make that had it not been for John Wayne, this country would have never defeated the Indians and we might not all be here today. Such gratitude may perhaps explain the interviewer's pursuit of the next topic when he asks: "For years American Indians have played an important -- if subordinate -- role in your Westerns. Do you feel any empathy with them?"

Mr. Wayne, magnificent in his consistency, replies: "I don't feel we did wrong in taking this great country away from them, if that's what you're asking. Our so-called stealing of this country from them was just a matter of survival. There were great numbers of people who needed new land and the Indians were selfishly trying to keep it for themselves."

There's more to the interview, but I have already imposed excessively upon your forebearance and your compassion for scholastic inquiry by quoting as much as I did.

What is significant about the above excerpts is that they are an authentic summary of the intellectual convictions of the vast majority of white Americans today. In simple, unpretentious style, Mr. Wayne has summarized the essential meaning of "the psychology of whiteness." Not only has he accurately defined its contextual parameters, but he has united historical past with sociological present to justify the white mind-set which believes the absence of color in one's epidermal tissue is the most important qualification for human existence.

Whiteness, however, is more than just the absence of skin color. It is the presence of social status. The psychology of whiteness -- this same psychology that has dominated America's educational process, shaped its theories of learning and controlled its pedagogy -- has endowed western civilization with a comfortable rationale for some of its most savage impulses. It is the psychology of whiteness which has permitted western civilization in its arrogance that it should organize the entire world in its own image. Herman Melville in his classic, Moby Dick, in chapter 42, "The Whiteness of the Whale," found partial support for this ideology. Whiteness was king and he wrote... "having for this imperial color the same imperial hue; and though this pre-eminence in it applies to the human race itself, giving the white man ideal mastery over every dusky tribe."

Just the notion of "the white man's burden" was responsible for one of the biggest ship-building sprees in modern history. Without the psychology of whiteness, there would have been no Pax Britannica.

America was no exception as this nation was founded on the explicit doctrine that all men, except African slaves, "are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights."

If slaves had no rights, they had no humanity. If they had no humanity, then it was not necessary to accord them the essential amenities of human progress: freedom of choice, social mobility and access to education.

Thus did America structure its domestic containment policy of Blacks. Antedating by 50 years a foreign policy of Russian containment, the domestic policy of Black containment was judicially established by Plessy v. Ferguson, politically legitimatized by the Ku Klux Klan and its silent majority of sympathizers and educationally sanctioned by geneticists, biologists, psychologists and teachers.

The psychology of whiteness is not a mere form of social intolerance or simple bigotry. It is the academic explanation for a socio-attitudinal facillitation known as racism.

The concept, racism, is recklessly tossed about today. Frequently it is applied by the average Black person to the last white person with whom he has had a disagreement. And the Black person is invariably right.

This requires a definition of racism. This may be historical heresy as far as your white education is concerned, but racism is the practice of a militarily superior white race, fortified by convenient academic and literary rationalizations, to subjugate any colored race for the sole purpose of economic exploitation. A Southern writer, Henry Grady, once called this achievement "the use of the peaceful majesty of intelligence."

Subsumed by that definition are all of the necessary paranoid rationalizations, historical non sequiturs such as "would you want your daughter to marry one?" and other academic crutches used to

explain biological inferiority and genetic impurity. Collectively, they have justified the maintenance of America's still thriving "separate but equal" society.

Let's pursue this whole notion of racism for a moment. Implicit in the suggested definition is the value judgement that Blacks cannot be racists. Blacks can be bigots, hatemongers and guilty of gross social intolerance. But we do not now seek to and have never sought to colonize a whole race of people merely because of the color of their skin and for no other reason. In Africa, tribes colonized other tribes, but the Africans did not wander all over the world in ships, building an empire on the backs of the white race. The psychology of whiteness then, is a cultural derivative of one civilization's obsession for exploiting humans. It is racial colonization. When you colonize a people, you dehumanize them, cripple their cognitive capacities, debase their belief in their worth, destroy their spirit and chain them to the enduring conviction that they can never be equal.

But any political practice, in this instance, colonization, also requires the authenticity of scholarship and the evidence of scientific validity. The larger the body of literature, the more respect accorded the practice.

Historically, whenever the temple of racial elitism was invaded by the unwashed advocates of a single brotherhood of man, there has always surfaced a great scholar, a distinguished and brilliant

theoretician whose ability to amass an impressive array of scientific evidence has once again purified the temple. This scholar has always been able to confirm the suspicions that all men may be equal, but some are really more equal than others.

Two years ago almost to the month, the Harvard Educational Review published a 123-page article by a psychologist of impeccable scholarship. The article, a discussion of race, intelligence and genetics, boldly suggested that the high heritability of intelligence was largely a matter of genetics and race and that environmental changes would not significantly alter this conclusion.

Dr. Arthur R. Jensen, however, merely stated in a far more objective manner and with a plethora of scientific evidence what many psychologists, geneticists and historians had been affirming for centuries. It has been said in a variety of ways, at once subtle, audacious, subliminal, and loud, but nonetheless capable of reduction to a single doctrine -- the doctrine of Nordic supremacy.

What has been fascinating has been the eclecticism of these historical interpreters of the impact of race on human progress and cognitive development.

From France, Count Arthur Joseph de Gobineau; England, William McDougall; Germany, Hans Gunther; the United States, Madison Grant and Lothrop Stoddard; and from Sweden, A. A. Retzius. It seems curiously old-fashioned today to believe that we once accorded

respectability to Retzius's theory of the cephalic index subsequently used by many to explain intelligence. A whole generation grew up no longer believing that the world was flat, but that the taxonomy of brachycephalic, dolichocephalic and mesocephalic calibrated intelligence.

Each generation and even each civilization is entitled, I suppose, to its academic love affair with sociometric and psychometric determinants of ethnic distinctions as a raticnale for behavorial adjustments. So, if Dr. Jensen is viewed in proper historical context, along with his many academic antecedents, it is quite conceivable that we, too, shall overcome. But the damage has been done to this generation, and to our present efforts to make mutual respect and affection a reality. When John Wayne says he believes in white supremacy, he has the statistical respectability of Dr. Jensen's theories to support his neurotic contentions.

The foregoing discussion of the historical antecedents and cultural determinants of the psychology of whiteness may have been somewhat lengthy. This road has been trod repeatedly by most speakers to the point of possible boredom. But those of us who are Black continue to exhaust your thresholds of tolerance because of an increasing historical amnesia that seems to afflict all of you. Like John Wayne, most of you weren't there when the Indians were massacred, you personally were not responsible for slavery, you had nothing to do with incarcerating 126,000 Japanese-Americans in concentration camps during World War Two and it is a statistical probability that almost

nobody in this room has ever attended a lynching of a Black man. Consequently, as far as most of you are honestly concerned, racism is declining. It is not. Racism is vigorously active in American society. As will be demonstrated later, it is endemic to our whole educational system. Recognizably, improvements for minorities have been effected. More Blacks, Chicanos, Native Americans and Puerto Ricans are being educated today than ever before. But the colonialism of American education has not changed. Remedial programs and compensatory education are little more than perfumed colonialism. The substantive changes in curriculum, test criteria, pedagogy and proportionate minority control have yet to be made.

But if racism persists in American education, can it be measured? The following statistics quantify its influence. Bear in mind that Blacks constitute approximately 12 per cent of the population.

In colleges and universities, Blacks comprise only 6 per cent of the students.

Whereas 17 per cent of all white Americans have four or more years of college education today, only 10 per cent of all Black Americans enjoy this achievement.

In the 107 medical schools in this country, only 3.7 per cent of the total enrollment of 40,238 is Black.

Whereas there is a white lawyer for every 637 persons in this country, there is only one Black lawyer for every 7,000 Blacks.

Blacks constitute less than two per cent of all Phds. in American education today. The extent to which the profession of psychology is guilty for helping to perpetuate such educational apartheid is reflected by one lonely fact. Between 1926 and 1966 -- forty years -- a total of 3,767 Phds. in psychology were granted at the 10 most prestigious institutions in the country. Of that number, only 10 Phds. or two-tenths of one per cent were awarded to Blacks.

The final addition of insult to injury for those Blacks who do manage to obtain an education is the job marketability of their degrees. It is an economic fact that a Black man with an A.B. degree does not earn as much as a white man with an A.B. degree. The white head of the family with a college degree has a median income of over $2,000 per year than the Black head of the family. A Black man with a college degree earns only $1,300 more than a white man with a high school degree, whereas a white man with a college degree earns $3,400 more than a white man with a high school degree.

It becomes easy to understand why the Black community has developed a massive disenchantment with the sociology of integration and has begun to move towards what many of us active in the Black liberation movement call "the politics of Blackness."

There is a potential danger when any one Black man attempts to set himself up as the single authority on Blackness. There is a common ideological denomenator, but there are multiple programmatic denomenators.

No one Black person can any longer speak for all Black people. The monolithic Negro has died and accompanying his demise is what many of you have affectionately come to regard as (quote) "the Negro leader." (unquote.)

This represents a new level of sophistication for us in our existence because as long as the white community had to deal with one or two Negro leaders, our agenda could not be determined by us, but <u>for</u> us. We never were the agents of our own change. Our leaders were handpicked. The criteria for success was being to get along with the white man. Integration sui generis was and probably always will be a socially desirable and morally feasible goal. But what about integration as a means, rather than the end? Is integration as a means the only option Blacks should pursue?

Although other options may have been equally valid, the Black community was told integration was the only path to racial equality in America. We believed it because the white man told us and we had been taught all our lives that "white was right." Besides, whites had all the money. It is no historical accident that during all these years the president of the NAACP has been a white man. But worse than the lack of authority in determining our own ethnic destiny was the failure of an idea favored by a few liberal white leaders. As hard as Black people fought for integration, white people resisted it. Black people would move into a neighborhood and whites move out. Blacks would integrate a public school and whites would send their children

to a private or parochial school. Blacks would try to get a job and the union which controlled the union shop would deny them the right to work.

With due apologies to that man in Washington, D. C. who works for Mr. Agnew and Mr. Hoover, let me make one thing perfectly clear -- racial integration in America has failed to accomplish its goals, not because Blacks have not desperately persisted, but because whites have passionately resisted.

The economic bankruptcy and searing racial tensions of Newark, New Jersey are not due to the events of the mere 11 weeks of a teachers' strike but to long years of white official oppression, corruption, violence and finally the white majority washing its hands by fleeing to the suburbs, leaving Newark with a declining tax base rate and a city on the verge of total insolvency.

Newark, however, symbolizes what occurs when the silent white majority in America long ago rejected integrated, quality education. The segregated classrooms in the inner cities, the segregated public housing projects, the segregated neighborhoods do not exist because only Blacks are there, but because whites refuse to <u>be</u> there. Pearl Bailey used to sing it well -- "it takes two to tango." It takes Black and White to practice integration and the record conclusively proves that the greatest resistance to integration in America, whether in Mississippi, Massachussetts, Montana or Michigan has come from the white silent racist majority.

Consequently after years of NAACP-directed patient litigation culminating inthe May 17, 1954 Supreme Court decision outlawing public school segregation, years of sit-ins, demonstrations, marches on Washington and finally a few rebellions in the true American tradition of other white rebellions, the Black community has finally decided that there must be another method worthy of at least consideration.

This conclusion has not been the result of any large national conference or any particular set of circumstances. It has been the sudden, almost cataclysmic awakening that we as a people were still an economically, politically and educationally powerless people.

This awakening begins, I submit, with June, 1966, in Greenville, Mississippi -- the proclamation of "Black Power." Black Power began the age of Blackness, the era of Black awareness and Black consciousness. It touched off a heretofore unfelt <u>national</u> pride in our Blackness. There always had been isolated pockets of Blackness in the Black community -- the few Black nationalists who begin with Martin Delany, Marcus Garvey, the Black Muslims whose eloquent spokesman, Malcolm X is read and quoted far more often today than he was heard and understood yesterday.

So, when Stokely Carmichael marched through Greenville, Mississippi, leading a small band of courageous followers, he unknowingly had become a kind of Black Moses, calling on Blacks in America to rally around their Blackness, to develop a new cohesion whose centripetal force was the commonality of white oppression. What he was asking was that

we develop a true sense of peoplehood, a peoplehood long felt by other white ethnic groups in America -- the Irish, the Italians, the Jews and the Poles.

This new commitment to Blackness did a strange thing -- it put Black people first. In this respect, again there was a white tradition. Charlie Wilson, chairman of General Motors, said it in 1954 -- "what's good for General Motors is good for America."

Black people were now reifying this philosophy of corporate self-determination to advance Black nationhood -- what's good for Black people is good for America, but Black unity must come first.

Since that short time -- and remember, this newly awakened national sense of Blackness was incubated only five years to 1966 -- since that short time, Black people have taken one small step for white America and a giant leap for Black nationhood. As the expression goes, we have finally begun to "get it together." Parenthetically, it must be pointed out that "getting it together" is a good ghetto expression which is one more you good white folks have not only stolen from us, but completely co-opted. Last year, practically every advertising slogan in America asked people to "get it together." Blacks used to "tell it like it is" but whites purloined that one, too.

Getting our Blackness together means a new unity, but also an appreciation of our intra-racial variations. Stated another way, Blackness is <u>many-splendored</u> in its <u>diversity</u>, but <u>single-purposed in its unity</u>.

Blackness means Black mayors of Newark, Cleveland, Gary, Durham, Fayette, Washington, D. C., Berkeley and Princeton. (Cambridge and New Haven are next.)

From a U. S. Senator with only a 2 per cent Black constituency to a Black Congressman with a 95 per cent Black constituency -- from Aretha Franklin's searing soulful blues to Leontyne Price's soaring operatic cadenzas -- from Count Basie conducting the most explosive force in jazz to Henry Lewis conducting the gentility of the New Jersey Symphony orchestra -- from Rev. Leon Sullivan on the Board of Directors of General Motors to Henry Park, President of Park Sausages. These are the wondrous dimensions of Blackness.

Educationally, Blackness, however, is more complex and has caused considerable intellectual anguish among scholars such as ourselves. But it is this complexity that defines its strength.

Blackness means a strong, academically sound Black Studies program, directed by Blacks, authenticated by Blacks and using predominantly Black-authored textbooks, in a predominantly white university controlled by whites. Blackness is also 116 struggling Black colleges trying to survive by serving a segment of the Black population white colleges have yet to discover.

Blackness is the brilliant president of 95%-white Michigan State University as well as the dynamic president of 95%-Black Malcolm X College. It is the new independent Black institution, an educational innovation whose curriculum, faculty, student body, board of trustees are all Black.

There are about 26 of these now in America, most of them existing through the impoverished largesse of the Black community, some dependent upon white support, but all of them unified by the common commitment to serve the Black community.

Blackness in Black studies is not merely Black variations of white history or white literature or white poetry. Blackness is rigorous intellectual inquiry, disciplined scholarship that teaches young Blacks how to reason logically, develop the necessary cognitive skills to help the Black community develop its economic resources, design and build its housing, school-recreational complexes, innovate educational parks, and elect responsive public officials.

Blackness is the search for an African identity which will fill us with a pride that we are not a people without a past, but are steeped in the ancient glories of African empires to which we are lovingly bound by the chains of ancestry and race.

Blackness is not, however, merely romanticizing our past, but pragmatically shaping our future. One hopes this room will be peopled by Black psychologists in the next couple of years, Black psychologists who do more than contemplate their Black navels in the same kind of absurd and socially non-meaningful research so many of you do now. More important than any of the above delineations of Blackness, the most important contribution to Black nationhood and Black peoplehood a Black scholar can make is to develop the cognitive skill of combining mathematical abstractions with a knowledge of the fissionable materials necessary to convert uranium 235 into uranium 238. That's the kind of knowledge that builds a nation and a people.

As for the politics of Blackness, it can best be capsulized by the number, 12. In January, the 12 Black Congressmen voted unanimously to boycott the State of the Union Address of President Nixon. They were acting in the best interest of black people and they were acting in unity.

A few weeks ago, 12 Black law professors from some of the largest law schools in the country including Yale, Harvard, Rutgers, UCLA, University of Illinois, Boston University and Colorado as well as the dean of the law school at Howard University formed a committee to assist in the defense of Angela Davis.

The politics of Blackness is not racist because it does not seek to exploit, deman or subjugate another race of people. It will not turn us into Pavlovian racists. What the politics of Blackness does do is affirm the right to exist, to build and to survive. If coming together as Black people is the only means by which we can insure the attainment of those priorities, then this we must do. But, in the historical tradition of a largely white pluralistic America, such a Black in-gathering will strengthen this country.

Still, history shows that no group of people has gracefully ever surrendered power. As Frederick Douglass observed, "power concedes nothing without a demand." White Americans have not taken kindly to this unanticipated display of Black independence. It is not easy to shrug off a half century of containing a whole race of people. And so the psychology of whiteness in American education is as unyielding today as it was yesterday. The only difference is its current confrontation with the politics of Blackness.

But the politics of Blackness in education is boldly imaginative, flexible and enthusiastically receptive to the newness of untested ideas.

It invites the psychology of whiteness to help American education to "come alive with the Pepsi generation" in the utilization of new practices and ideas. The new vocabulary alone defines programs that did not exist 25 years ago -- performance contracting, educational vouchers, educational accountability, open classrooms, university without walls, computerized learning, instruction by television, student participation in the selection of principals, external degree programs, and educational families. The electronic revolution of a mere quarter of a century has so radically affected our learning patterns, we have yet to learn how to harness its potential for programmed instruction.

But the politics of Blackness is unafraid of new ideas because the old ideas have failed to educate Blacks and narrow the cognitive gap between Black and white which the Arthur Jensens, the Julian Stanleys and their adherents cite ad nauseum.

Because centrally administered schools have failed, Blacks want the option of trying out Black community-controlled schools. This does not mean we disavow or no longer want to be educated in centrally administered or integrated schools. It does mean, however, that all of you in this room know so little about what takes place in the learning process of human beings that you should want to encourage Black-determined options to assess whether new criteria introduced into the education of young Blacks can accelerate cognitive growth.

The concept of options is crucial to this process. What Black educational professionals are now saying is that the Black community wants to define the criteria for its academic growth and approve the curriculum and the pedagogy used within Black communities. This must not be construed as separatism or as an end in itself, but rather as autonomy and a means. It is important to emphasize that the white academic community is warmly welcomed to become partners in this new venture. The Black community is asking exactly that -- co-equal partnership.

If we are ever going to break the stranglehold of white colonialism which has suffocated our self-esteem and our perceptions of the real world, we must incorporate the humanism of Black concepts into the epistemology of education.

Let me give you some specific examples. Let's start with the word, "disadvantaged." If you take nothing away from everything I've said today, I hope you will go away convinced that the phrase, "disadvantaged," is an incorrigibly racist word when applied to Blacks, Chicanos, Native Americans or Puerto Ricans.

What is particularly offensive about the word, "disadvantaged," is that it totally ignores the etiology of racism. It reflects the Moynihan syndrome, white America's pathological capacity for placing the blame for the exploited group's condition on the group itself, rather than on the exploiter.

In a paper delivered before the 137th annual convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Science last December, Dr. Charles Leo Thomas, a Black psychologist, commented on the various terms which have been used to define the deprived status of ethnic minorities. Said Thomas: "The terms, disadvantaged, high risk, etc. are viewed with disdain by the groups to which the terms have been attached. Besides connoting a dimunition of worth, these terms have a way of not placing enough emphasis on the fact that it is our society that has produced the high risk, disadvantaged and deprived students."

Thomas gives other reasons why the terms are inappropriately applied, such as the relative meaning of these terms, depending upon who is defining the student, and the degree of disadvantageousness and different combinations of attributes which result in several prototypes of disadvantaged students, depending upon the institutional requirements and expectations.

Even where "white experts" on Black oppression have recognized the differences between the white oppressor's perceptions and the Black oppressed's notions of his circumstances, they have still refused to accord any intellectual respectability to Black views.

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development has published a fairly comprehensive assessment of this problem in a book, "Perspective on Human Deprivation." In Chapter II of the book which is concerned with divergent concepts of deprivation and disadvantage, the Institute acknowledges the differences in perception between the oppressed and the oppressor, then arrogantly proceeds to utilize only the views of the white oppressing majority in defining the problem.

I made two lists several months ago of words and phrases used by whites to describe the Black condition of subjugation. Next to the list of white words, I placed Black words. Thus, "disadvantaged" became "dispossessed". "Handicapped" became "penalized." "Economic deprivation" became "economic subjugation." "Culturally deprived" became "culturally oppressed." We are not a culturally deprived people. After all, white folks can't sing or dance. And when you learned how, you stole it from Blacks.

If one word most accurately and scientifically sums up the condition of the exploited, oppressed, deprived and disadvantaged Black, Chicano, Native American and Puerto Rican, it is <u>disequalized.</u> Let me repeat that -- disequalized. In that one word, the etiology of the racism of the white majority and the oppressed condition of the black minority is perfected. The next time any of you in this room write or use the word, "disadvantaged," to apply to any oppressed ethnic minority in this country, at least you now have the security of knowing that you are openly and notoriously espousing a racist concept.

I have chosen to concentrate on only one word. There are other concepts in educational and psychological literature which are equally demeaning and even inaccurate. For example, the term, "mental abilities," really means "developed abilities," or "school related abilities," because that is what is being tested.

Your organization might seek the guidance of the Association of Black Psychologists in changing your perspectives. The formation of the Association of Black Psychologists represents one of the most significant events in American education because it meant that not only were Black educational professionals authenticating the realities of the Black experience, but they were simultaneously disauthenticating the white misinterpretations of that experience.

This is why it was imperative that the Black psychologists call for a moratorium on testing. At this point, I turn from what we in the Black community call preaching to meddling. Being both Black and a staff member of the Educational Testing Service, I think it would be a monumental impossibility to avoid a discussion of the testing experience as it affects the Black community.

I am neither a psychometrician, nor a psychologist. And during the last year at ETS, I have struggled with the intricacies of moderator variables, covariance analyses, waded through the muddy waters of construct and concurrent validity, predictive validation and if the concept, culturally deprived in the domain of tests and measurements is quantifiable, you are looking at the perfect example. Nonetheless, aware of Alexander Pope's admonisment about the danger of the paucity of knowledge, I have dared conclude that tests sui generis are neither nefarious instruments of oppression nor colonialistic tools constructed independently of the whole educational process that has uneducated Blacks. Tests are effects, not causes.

There can be little disagreement, however, with the contention of many Black psychologists and educators that nationally standardized tests have, 1) excluded the Black population in establishing their norms; 2) become what Dr. Elias Blake calls "instruments of reinforcement for negative Black images;" and 3) been used inadvertently or otherwise, to bar Blacks from higher education.

Testing when used for evaluation or diagnosis can render a genuine service to education. When used to classify or select, particularly when such tests are classifying or selecting groups of people who have been excluded in the normative process, then tests are inappropriately and unfairly used.

Testing as selection instruments have a long history and certain cultures used them centuries ago. The Chinese, for example, used an elementary form of selection testing as far back as 2200 B.C. During the Chan dynasty in 1100 B.C., candidates for public office took formal examination to demonstrate their command of the five basic arts: music, archery, horsemanship, writing and arithmetic.

But the Chinese then as they are now and as are most cultures are an ethnically cohesive culture. Their values, their expectations, and their skills have all been developed within the Bessemer process of a common ethnicity. As Jerome Bruner pointed out in a paper last year in London, "There is a very crucial matter about acquiring a skill..... The goal must be plain; one must have a sense of where one is trying to get to in any given instance of activity. For the exercise of skill is governed by an intention and feedback on the relation between what one has intended and what one has achieved thus far."

This important factor of intentionality is absent in the Black educational experience in the white world. There was never any intention to educate us, to include us in your history books, to appoint us to your faculties, to help us develop your tests, to include us in the norming of these tests, to let us participate in the assessment of cognitive skills, to accept our intellectual suggestions or our moral judgements. In the world of education, Blacks remain the "invisible man" and when we fail your tests, you crucify us for it.

One of my favorite lines of poetry is written by that gentle Black bard, Countee Cullen:

"Yet do I marvel at this curious thing -- to paint a poet Black and bid him sing."

I, too, marvel at the curious thing which society has done in the world of testing. First, we are dehumanized and brutally segregated, kept outside the pale of socialization of your values, then we are brought in as an afterthought still crippled by your debasement, given a totally inadequate, if not altogether inferior education, then tested and you exclaim, "aha, you score 15 points or one standard deviation below the white mean. We have psychometrically established your inferiority."

We could have told you that before you tested us. If there was ever a classic example of non-communication in the black-white symbiosis, it occurred when the Association of Black Psychologists called for a moratorium on testing. The word, "moratorium" means a "waiting period

set by an authority, a suspension of activity." Moratorium does not mean permanent abolition and the Black Psychologists Association was seeking a period of agonizing re-appraisal on the problem of testing and minorities.

But the testing industry whose scientific pride was wounded, replied that tests were equally predictive of success for Blacks as for whites. The Black psychologists rejoined that they were not concerned with predictive validity, but the consequences of standardized testing as it influences the learning process of disequalized Blacks. The two groups just did not hear each other.

You must realize that the psychometric precepts of test reliability and predictive validity simply mean that the system functions as it is supposed to for those by and for whom the system was designed. That does not include Blacks.

In a cybernated society that builds atom bombs, sends rockets to the moon and electronically computes light years of equations in one week, there has to be some kind of measuring instruments that calibrate the ability to handle these jobs. Medicine, engineering, nuclear physics, chemistry and architecture are just a few of the disciplines that demand and rightfully require testing. There is no quarrel with that purpose of testing.

But with this academic need for testing, there has sprung up a psychometric obsession in our society that classifies minorities as inferior and prevents their accessibility to some form of advanced training.

This is not only morally wrong, but when it affects a man's right to earn a living, then as the Supreme Court recently ruled in an 8-0 unanimous decision, it is unconstitutional. That March 22, 1971 decision could conceivably have as lasting an impact on the inter-relationship of education, employment and race as the 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education decision did on education, public policy and race.

By all means, retain testing, but expand its domains.

If you insist on the I.Q. as an index of cognitive skill, then why not include the B.Q. as an index of social adaptability.

The B.Q. is a bigotry quotient. Last year, in a paper before the ETS Invitational Conference on Testing, Dr. Theodore Sizer, dean of Harvard's Graduate School of Education called on educators to establish some reasonably scientific method for measuring bigotry.

I want to strongly endorse that suggestion and hope that one day this Association would also direct its energies toward the social needs as well as the individual needs of society.

The B.Q. would determine what kids are so anti-social in their disdain for ethnic groups, they would receive intensive guidance and counseling as well as special courses. A person would be required to pass a B.Q. test as well as an I.Q. test in order to receive further education. Lest some of you bridle at this extension of psychometrics into such a sensitive area, consider the alternative. With all of this country's educational accomplishments and scientific break-throughs, all we have succeeded in raising are several generations of brilliant bigots.

One of my colleagues and dear friends at ETS, Henry Dyer, recently labeled I.Q. tests as "statistical and psychological monstrosities." The Black community has been saying that for years. But we would be willing to retain the I.Q. criterion if another criterion, the B.Q., were used to demonstrate the insufficiency of an individual's education. An I.Q. of 145 would be quite meaningless if the person had a B.Q. of 30. Just think of all the people who might not be in public life today or could not teach if their B.Q.'s were below a certain cut-off point.

Education can no longer remain neutral in a world engulfed by racism, war, poverty and pollution. Education must become accountable to the people and it must develop a humanizing value system. Independent inquiry and scholastic objectivity are commendable heuristic exercises for the monastic gatekeepers who have controlled higher education accessibility. But our increasingly impersonal, electronic society is literally begging for ways to bring us together as members of the human family. Again, to quote Jerome Bruner: "let knowledge as it appears in our schooling be put into the context of action and commitment....the mobilizing of knowledge in the interest of conviction that change is imperative."

Such change is facilitated when we utilize the administrative design of accountability whose purpose is to help us devise a method by which we can identify the respective responsibilities for teaching children all they are capable of learning.

These responsibilities lie with the teacher, the local school districts, the central school administration, the city administration, the parents, the community and the teachers' union. Accountability is an instrument for assessing the impact of each of these variables and conditions which are interwoven into the cloth of our children's education. So new and little understood a concept as accountability is an invitation to controversy. Harsh and jealous condemnations are to be expected. But when criticism of this educational necessity emanates from putatively informed professionals, the conflict takes on all of the coloration of a battle over an academic territorial imperative.

Recently, for example, one distinguished Black scholar expressed his unhappiness with a proposed accountability research design. His criticisms, lacking sociological specificity, were also astonishingly contradictory. But perhaps accountability will succeed after all, because this was the same Black scholar who strongly opposed Black Studies when they were first developed and this new inter-disciplinary discipline seems to have easily survived his verbal assaults. Accountability will, too.

For those who continue to view tests as the primary deterrent to Black educational advancement, accountability will help change some of the criteria of those tests.

But changing the tests alone is not going to compensate for the disequalization of Blacks. That's just more perfumed colonialism.

The entire educational process must be restructured to provide more acceptable options for Blacks. We must provide more minority-related and empathetic counselling, not in the cold, austere schools, but right in the affective heart of the ghetto in the backrooms of pool halls and recreation centers. We must overhaul courses so that Black curricular expectations will be met. More Black authority must be introduced into the school administrations. More research must be determined and directed by Black educators and psychologists and this association can make a start by developing a section specifically for that purpose. I must confess at being appalled at the astonishing esoteric topics totally irrelevant to the real world about us that characterize your research papers. I realize how important the use of rats are to the advancement of psychological theory, but my brothers and sisters in the ghetto of Harlem might well wonder about the purpose of research were they to be read these descriptive summaries of projects:

"Acquisition of an avoidance response was found to vary as a joint function of the presence or absence of gonads and exogenous testosterone dose. The results suggests a complex dose dependence of avoidance on testosterone level."

Or this one was fascinating: "Movies of rat mating behavior were analyzed frame-by-frame to determine the temporal order of responses by the female and male. Raising of the female's rump preceded raising her head and the deep thrust by the male. It appears to be the initial movement in lordosis by female rats."

The brothers and sisters in the ghetto would marvel at such cerebration and respond: "we can dig all that jazz, but tell us how do we get rid of rats in the ghetto?"

If some of you researchers wanted to make a tremendous contribution to human progress and to ecological enhancement, you might try to diagnose some way of inducing self-destruction within rats -- a food, or pursued response that would cause them to drown themselves or simply drink themselves to death. A facetious suggestion you may conclude, but to those whose babies are bitten nightly by disease-carrying rats, your research is not so facetious as it is tragic. Here again, the Association of Black Psychologists might be able to provide guidelines for such a project.

Your organization might also help fund the Association of Black Psychologists to learn more about the cognitive development of Black kids in different educational environments. Specifically, why not develop research projects in co-operation with the Black Muslims schools, Leroi Jones African Free School in Newark, the Chad School in Newark. There has been almost no research on the comparative success of Black-controlled schools.

Also, research has not been extended to explain some nagging unknown variables in the Black educational experience. For example, there are two elementary schools in the same Northeast section of Washington, D. C. both of which are predominantly Black. They draw kids from approximately the same Black socio-economic backgrounds. Yet, the kids in the Benning school have scored dramatically higher

over the last five years on reading and mathematic achievement tests than the kids in the Smothers school. Why? Heteregenous grouping, better teachers, an efficient principal, extended parent involvement or what? Find out those answers. In one fine piece of research co-authored by Tom Hilton at ETS, a comparison of mean scores on two STEP tests were made for Black and white kids in two cities. The two ethnic groups were broken down into two more sub-groups, academic and non-academic. Over a four-year span from grade five to grade seven, the Blacks in town A scored consistently higher than the Blacks in town B and the whites in town A scored consistently higher than the whites in town B. Furthermore, the Blacks in town A scored almost as well as the whites in town B. Academic growth in those two cities was obviously the result of a three-way interaction between the city, the curriculum and race. Here again, further research is mandatory to ascertain the reasons for these differences.

There is a rich lore of evidence available to all of you in this room and if the Eastern Psychological Association will exit the unreal, antiseptic world of the laboratory, get out into the real, dirty world of the ghetto and help find answers to the perplexities of the learning process, then the psychology of whiteness may not end up on a historical collision course with the politics of Blackness.

What occurs in American education does not reside within the sole power of the Black community, but primarily with the white community. We are of course, determined to do our own thing, but you are welcomed to join us in a technical assistance partnership if you are committed to the same humanizing pedagogy as are we.

I would like to leave with you a thought about the essential purpose of research. It is written by the president of ETS, Bill Turnbull, and represents the kind of thinking that impelled me to merge my commitment to Black Liberation with the broad commitment to the oneness of Humanity. I can think of no more appropriate expression of the commality of human aspiration than these words, written as an introduction to an ETS research bulletin:

> "Through educational research, we may discover how to preserve the fresh curiosity and delight in learning of the young child. We may learn what threatens this gift, and how to remove the threat. We may also discover how we may more surely rekindle minds of all ages that have been turned off by life and circumstance, how to lessen hatred and hostility, and to increase love and respect -- for others, and for ourselves. These are root concerns of current educational research, including that conducted by Educational Testing Service."

Those should be the "root concerns" of the Eastern Psychological Association.

They must be the root concerns of all of us who labor in the vineyards of brotherhood on behalf of our fellow man.